



## News Release

For Immediate Release

Contact: Joe DiLaura 317/232-3396

Robert Shula 317/234-0263

### **Worker Shortages Projected in Health Care and Manufacturing Industries**

*Local Consortia Identifying Root Causes, Developing Solutions Aimed at Shortage Areas*

INDIANAPOLIS (Jan. 23, 2006) -- Occupations in the health care and manufacturing industries are projected to have the largest worker shortages in the next two years, according to a new study from the Indiana Department of Workforce Development.

Eleven teams of economic and workforce development experts from around the state – one from each of the state's workforce development regions – conducted the research in their local regions as a first step in a three-part process designed to provide Hoosiers with the skills to find better jobs, earn higher wages and build local communities.

In health care, top occupational shortages were projected for registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, pharmacists, and registered therapists, while shortages in the manufacturing sector are foreseen in metal and plastic computer-controlled machine tool operators, welders, cutters, solderers and brazers, and metal and plastic machinists.

According to the report, the top five key skills in shortage throughout the state are critical thinking, complex problem solving, science, reading comprehension, and active (lifelong) learning.

"This report provides us with an initial road map of where key shortages are expected to occur in the next 24 months, as well as the necessary skills required in these skill and occupational areas, said Ron Stiver, Commissioner of the Indiana Department of Workforce Development. "More importantly, it will provide us with an opportunity to provide resources to local consortia who can begin work on addressing the root causes and develop efforts that will help address the identified shortage areas in their local communities."

Among the highlights statewide:

- Emerging industries within manufacturing were centered around bio/lifesciences disciplines; it is these occupations that will drive economic growth throughout the state. The top key emerging industries and occupations are agri-business/agri-science; professional, scientific, & technical services; hospitality; nano-manufacturing specialists/microbedded systems specialists, geographical information (gis) systems technicians, fiber optics technicians; electrical and

electronic engineering technicians; chemical manufacturing/technicians; cnc-mimm.

- Given the state's traditional manufacturing base, manufacturing occupations were selected by virtually every region. Key factors causing this issue were the looming retirements of baby boomers and the need for firms to competitively adapt their processes to the demands of the marketplace.
- The health care industry was also cited throughout the state as a shortage area, with registered nurses, pharmacists, licensed practical nurses, respiratory therapists, and radiological technicians listed as occupations facing shortages throughout Indiana. Although the health care services industry does not drive or lead economic growth, shortages will continue to persist as a result of demographic trends and the aging of the state's population.

The eleven regions are competing for \$20 million in grants under the state's Strategic Skills Initiative, a new workforce development effort that seeks to identify critical occupational and skill shortages and their causes throughout the state, and then fund grants to local consortia to develop solutions that address the shortages.

The local consortia involved in the initiative are currently developing reports in each of their regions which identify the root causes of the shortages. The third phase of the project calls for solutions to be developed in each region tied directly to the root causes that present well researched and meaningful approaches that will provide long term results. Grants will then be distributed to the regional consortia through a competitive process later this year.

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Attachment: Strategic Skills Initiative Occupational and Skills Shortage Report  
<http://www.in.gov/dwd/employers/SSI/shortagesreportstate.pdf>